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THE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS OF JESUS.

A Thesis

By

James Hybert Pollard

Prepared in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in the Graduate School of Boston University, 1927-1928.

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THE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS OF JESUS.

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Necessary Limitations of the Subject.

This inquiry concerning the self-consciousness of Jesus recognizes at the very outset certain necessary limitations.

There is more than can be measured in the experience of Jesus. Like the first explorers of the Missouri-Mississippi waterway, who after travelling a thousand miles still left the major portion of the great system undiscovered, so any treatment must leave unmeasured and undiscovered the larger part of the self-consciousness of Jesus. In the consciousness of Jesus there were over-reaches, surpluses, enlarged dimensions which could be measured only by a like experience. Such an experience no inquirer possesses. But after this limitation has been stated and frankly admitted, one is compelled to state that the consciousness of Jesus has value for humanity only so far as we can interpret his experience in terms of our own. There is no need to disagree as to the extent of the unmeasured and unmeasurable in his consciousness when only the measurable and discoverable can function in bringing man to God.

An inquiry into the self-consciousness of Jesus is subject, further, to the decided limitations of any inquiry concerning the depths of another personality. We live with other personalities year after year and yet we do not know them. Those, whom, by our interpretation of the signs of consciousness, we place on the highest pedestal, sometimes commit crime

and those from whom we expect nothing, sometimes, in days of test, prove true heroes. The evaluation of the consciousness of another always has in it a large element of speculation.

A third limitation is that of fragmentary and inadequate records from which to work. The gospel records are especially inadequate for the needs of an inquiry into the self-consciousness of Jesus because they were not written with the purpose of furnishing data for such a task. Except what is indicated by the total impression of the life of Jesus, there are in the gospel materials only small and rare portions which offer any real help in the matter of revealing the consciousness of Jesus.

2. Fundamental viewpoint: the self-consciousness of Jesus developmental and not static.

If we are to think of Jesus in human terms at all, we are forced to concede that there was a time in his early childhood when such valuew as God and the Messiah-ship did not, or practically did not, exist in his consciousness. But in the later period of his ministry we find such conception to have assumed a complete and unique form. Two such facts can only be accounted for and explained by an intervening period of development. This consideration, if no other, would compel us, at the very outset of this study, to assume the developmental nature of the consciousness of Jesus.

The self-consciousness of Jesus must be conceived as developmental in order to have any meaning for human experience. If his consciousness of God and his mission came to him through some sort of a psychological cyclone; then the laws of his mind would have been different from the laws under which our minds

operate and his experience could have little, if any value, in leading us in its own direction.

The mind and experience cannot be conceived as static; to conceive of such a mind and experience would make of Jesus sometimes entirely not human, even in the so-called human side of his nature. The gospel of John seems to conceive of the mind of Jesus as practically static; at the beginning of his ministry he knows all things; he fore-knows all that is to happen, nothing surprises him. From the beginning his self-consciousness is infinite, it has not further room to grow. Such a conception would make Jesus nothing more than a play-actor taking a part, with such a consciousness there could be no real experience in the life of Jesus, at least as far as human experience goes. The approach of this paper conceives the consciousness of Jesus as being shaped and enlarged and changed, though never conquered, by the circumstances and experiences of human life. His was therefore a growing, evolving deepening consciousness.

When we attempt to study the consciousness of Jesus from the developmental view-point again we face the limitations which our sources place upon us. The gospel of John cannot be used, for it in itself is an interpretation of the self-consciousness of Jesus from the static view-point. The arrangement of the events in the Synoptic gospels has its own purpose in view, and was never arranged with an idea of depicting the developing experience of Jesus. Yet we do have a list of his experiences in more or less a chronological order and we know it must have been these experiences which

ripened and deepened his consciousness. So while we may not depend too much upon the exact placement of incidents and events in the Synoptic Gospel for a reconstruction of the self-consciousness of Jesus, yet in a broad and general way the placement scheme of the Synoptic Gospels may be trusted for our guidance. It is in the general scheme of the Synoptic life-story of Jesus that we shall try to re-discover his evolving self-consciousness.

The outline of the argument of this paper is as follows; The self-consciousness of Jesus was contunuous growth. In boyhood and early manhood there was in the experience of Jesus a growing consciousness of God. This consciousness of God became the supreme aspect of the experience of Jesus and finally led to the certainty of his Messianic mission. This consciousness of mission growingly focused by misunderstanding, opposition, circumstances, guided by spiritual and eternal principles, motivated by the will of God, finally lead to the conviction that he as Messiah must die upon a cross.

I. GOD IN THE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS OF JESUS.

When we come upon Jesus in the gospel we find a character with the consciousness of God quite fully developed, at least comparatively so. To be sure this God-consciousness was to be matured and more fully developed by clash with situation after situation during the years of his ministry; but nevertheless when we meet him at the very beginning of his ministry we feel that here is a man who is dead sure of God.

This extraordinary assurance of God and his will could not have come in a day. It is unthinkable that this unique consciousness of God could have come suddenly one day in an extraneous,

artificial way. The only way we can account for the consciousness of God in Jesus' life and at the same time make it humanly intelligible is to posit a theory of gradual development.

For such a position we really have no gospel material. The statement by Luke simply tells that Jesus grew as any boy and young man would grow. The visit to the temple at twelve, while a bit of evidence which might be of help in corroborating a theory. Thus, while we are certain that the development of the consciousness of God must have taken place in the so-called "silent years", years concerning which we have no gospel record, yet we have no gospel material which we may use in reconstructing the development which may have taken place in the consciousness of Jesus during that period.

a) Consciousness of God was indigenous to the personality of Jesus.

Just as a son in the family cannot remember the time when he did not know he was the son of his father, so Jesus never could recall a time when he was not consciousness of his sonship toward God. It was an experience he knew as memory awakened, it was an experience which seemed to have always been with him. The very atmosphere of his Jewish home helped Jesus to look upon religion as the first consideration of life. He did not care for, he did yield to the low things of life because communion and fellowship with his father was the first interest of his heart. This seems to be exactly the bearing of his words in answer to his mother in the temple (Luke 2.49) "Wist ye not that I must be about my father's business?" to the boy, in his early adolescence, the things of God were supreme in his interest and thought. Berguer; "Aspects of

the Life of Jesus" page 146 illuminates the experience of Jesus at this point for us in the following paragraphs;

Then to their reproaches Jesus answers; "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

A reply at once full of assurance and surprise. For the first time Jesus is aware of the difference between his experience and that of his parents. He is astonished that they do not know when he is completely occupied with the one thing necessary. What is more, he affirms, as the simplest fact in the world, the urgency of his duty to be about his Father's business. ********** He perceives that they are ignorant, or that they appear to be ignorant, of what is now for him the centre of life; his Father's business, that which relates to the Father, to the God who speaks to him.

Every candid child has had similar surprises, every child, at least, who, about to become a man, has looked at the world with a frank soul, a soul directed by God. But with us they are quickly effaced by our participation in the common insincerity which places the cares of the outer world before the inner truth. People persuade us, and we are easily persuaded--that we are foolish to have believed in the primacy of the conscience and the sovereignty of absolute truth; and it is then that we begin to waver between serious morality and distraction.

With Jesus nothing of this kind occurs. His testimony to the truth which he has seized inwardly is complete and absolute. He suffers from no divisions of mind. Hence his astonishment that

others, especially his parents, do not know what he knows."

We are not to think, certainly, of Jesus as having at any time an abnormal, or extra-human experience of God, but simply that he had at all times the fullest possible experience of God, for a boy, for a young man, and at last of a man full grown. When he thought he thought God. He saw God in the sunshine and rain, in the birds, in the grass, in the lilies. God never seemed to him unreal. No shadow came between him and his Heavenly Father. Daily communion with God was to his soul what the sunshine is to the flower. His was therefore a continually growing experience of God, an experience which brought ever more and more of joy and freedom. To Jesus the consciousness of God was a never ending source of happiness, peace and soul satisfaction: a fact which was destined to be central in his message to men.

It was the natural, normal, the inevitable thing for Jesus to take every experience to his Heavenly Father. As a little child runs to its mother with every experience of life, so Jesus always goes to his Father. As the stresses and moods and new temptations of adolescence came upon him, it seemed the natural thing to turn first to his Heavenly Father for help. As the problems of clothing, food, and sometimes, perhaps, even poverty pressed upon the life of his home, nothing occurred to him except first to ask the Heavenly Father for these things and to talk with him concerning whether these things were needful or not. And when the giant problems of manhood's thought, social, political, religious, with which his nation bristled, crossed his path, again according to his habit, he turned not first to "flesh and blood" but first toward his Father to find a way toward solution.

An ever-developing and ever-enlarging experience of God was taking place in the consciousness of Jesus during the thirty silent years. From the early dawn of consciousness until the final battle in Gethsemanae God-consciousness seems to be indigenous to the character of Jesus. Until finally he grew to feel so near God, to feel and think and a will so much like God, that he became ready to hear at his baptism those startling words "Thou are my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."

b) The God-consciousness of Jesus was an achievement. Though it was normal and natural for Jesus to turn to the Heavenly Father in every experience of life, yet it is quite as certain his unbroken consciousness of God was achieved at the price of much struggle and effort. A God-consciousness such as Jesus possessed could not have been received in some external and easy way. For this he agonized. Many nights he spent in prayer. Many times, no doubt, he had this certainty of the will of God and the presence of God for only the day at hand, and the future, even, tomorrow, lowered as an uncertain cloud before him. As great situations and crises arose in his life for each, by communion and prayer, he had to find the will of God. For and in each great question as the Sabbath, clean and unclean, etc., he had to discover the attitude of God. Perhaps it took months and years to struggle through some of these questions, perhaps he never knew, at least such is conceivable, until the hour of action and decision was upon him; but the great point is, at the critical moment he always arrived; when the need came upon him, he was unfailingly ready to speak the thought of God without a shadow of misgiving.

It took effort to keep an even and happy consciousness of God in the midst of a family of normally selfish and perhaps quarrelsome younger children. There must have occurred in the Nazareth family all the occasions for mal-adjustments, misunderstandings and all the other things which tend to put the heart out of tune with itself and with God, and many times, as a young men, it was only after a long night of agonizing prayer that the sweet serenity of a complete consciousness of God was achieved and kept in the heart of Jesus. Michlem in "The Galilean", page 29, has a section "On being misunderstood at home". Here he says; "The New Testament itself seems almost to go out of its way to explain that, for all her prayers and expectations, she (Mary) did not understand her son; his mother, as well as his brothers, did not "believe on him"; and we must realize that part of the cross which Jesus had to bear was that he, like his disciples, had to forsake mother and home, and had, as he said, to "hate" father and mother, yes, and "his own soul also" for the sake of the gospel. If only his mother had stood by him during those lonely years: if only she had been what tradition would make out. We can imagine the heartsickness which were his when he said whoever does God's will is his mother, sister and brother". And who can doubt but that the background of this incident portrayed in Mark 3.20-21, 31-35 is made up of thirty years of being often misunderstood by his mother and sometimes ridiculed by brothers and sisters, both as a boy and man at home. In such a life situation it was no moderate task to keep an unbroken consciousness of the presence of God.

We know that the sunshine of God's face and the clear and definite consciousness of his will were purchased by Jesus always at the price of faithful and tireless prayer and long and exhausting thought. And nothing in the world takes so much effort and concentration and true strength of soul as real praying and real thinking. In the incident of the temptation, described by the Synoptic Gospels at the beginning of his ministry, we see the heavy price Jesus paid, not in this particular temptation experience only but over and over again in his life for all of his spiritual achievements.

The point of struggle and effort, from his earliest consciousness of God until the day of the cross, is expressed in words which are undoubtedly his own, so true are they to his character and type of speech, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me" John 4.34. Always with him the first thing in life was his Father's will. The crowning fact of Jesus' spiritual achievement is just this; that he never in his life knowingly disobeyed his Father's will. At the cost of awful struggle and bitter tears, though it was, not only in Gethsemanae but in every critical temptation and situation of life, as far as he knew, he never violated the direction of his Father's will. The author of Hebrews understood the inner life of Jesus much better than many later theologians, as shown by his statement; "Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong cryings and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear though he was a son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered" Hebrews 5.7-8. The perfect obedience of Jesus came at the cost of suffering,

struggle and agony.

Obedience to the will of God is not only the point of struggle in the spiritual achievement of Jesus, but is exactly the point of his full and complete success; namely that he withstood every temptation and never disobeyed the will of God. Here again the author of Hebrews gives us the net result of the struggles of Jesus; "But one that hath been in all points tempted like as we, yet without sin" Hebrews 4.15b. This result is called sinlessness by the older theologians and moral perfection by the new. But called by whatever name it is just this; that Jesus never transgressed the known will of God. The moral perfection of Jesus means, not that his moral perfection should be judged by the standards of today, or perhaps by the formal standards of any day, not that he never took a drink of wine etc. but that he never did an act which in his knowledge and judgement was against the will of God. Whatever he discovered to be against the will of God went, without an adieu, out of his life. This process in the life of Jesus started early, for if evil habits are fixed in muscle and brain they are not easily changed, from the awakening of conscience it had been the life habit of Jesus to put out of his life everything which did not harmonize with the will of God.

Thus we conclude that an ever-enlarging, ever-developing experience of God was taking place in the consciousness of Jesus during the thirty silent years, and also during his ministry. The God-conaciousness of Jesus was a process of development, a natural indigenous element in his character to be sure, but developed by thought and struggle and prayer in contact with the outward circumstances of his life.

II. The Implications of the God-consciousness of Jesus to his Thinking.

Jesus was a master problem solver. He was a close, hard, straight thinker. He has been lauded as a poet, prophet, preacher, healer and his work described in superlative terms in many fields of endeavor, but as a thinker he has been too much over-looked. The conclusions which he reached concerning the basic and fundamental problems of human life are the timeless solutions, solutions which must, sooner or later, be used if these problems are ever settled right. In fact, his conclusions must be used if the major problems of human life are ever settled, for nothing is ever settled until it is settled right. It is not, however, within the province of this paper to discuss the intellectual measure of Jesus; but the contention here is simply this; results show the tremendous effectiveness of Jesus' thinking and the fulcrum of his mighty thinking was his central certainty of God. This paper seeks to show that the consciousness of God was continually the determining factor in all of Jesus' decisions and conclusions. We will notice some selected implications of this fact as it appears in the resultant teaching recorded in the gospels.

a) The implication, first, that no one else has so perfectly and fully known God as He.

The most radical statement of this implication to be found in the Synoptics is given in Mt. 11.27 and Lk. 10.22; following Matthew, "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth the son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father save the son, and he to whomsoever the son willeth to

reveal him". Much thoughtful and painstaking criticism has been expended by Harnack and others upon this passage. The attack upon the verse might be summed up as follows; 1) That this statement far outdoes the Synoptic Jesus and therefore must be a Johanine fragment which has found lodgement in the Synoptic tradition.)2) That the verse as given here does not fit into its context.

But there appears to be no valid reason for the above construction. The words, most naturally interpreted, seem to describe the exact situation in which Jesus found himself. "No one knoweth the son save the Father" expresses the supreme loneliness of Jesus at this period. He was misunderstood, truly unknown, on every hand, not only by the multitude, but by his disciples, by John the Baptist, (Mt. 11.2-6 and paralell), and by his own mother and brothers (Mat. 12.46-50 and paralells). In his purpose for a primarily spiritual kingdom, in the principles upon which he sought to base his career, in the truths which he was teaching about God, and in countless ways he was completely alone. No one knew him, no one understood his personality or his motives except the Father in Heaven. " * No one knoweth the son save the Father" is a statement of actual fact.

" * Neither doth any know the Father, save the son". Here again we find a literal description of the situation in which Jesus stood; his whole being and evvort was given to trhing to tell people about God, and they did not even have enough of Knowledge of God, in common with Him, to hear and understand. And indeed, again, who ever knew God in comparison to Jesus? If one wishes to know about God to whom shall he go? To the brilliant galacy of thinkers and philosophers who adorned the ancient world?

Yes, from them one might learn a little. But one who has heard and understood one great teaching of Jesus, like the story of the lost son, knows more about God than all the wise men of the ancient world could tell him. The historical result of Jesus teaching proves that no one ever knew God in the same full and complete way that Jesus knew him. And if this be true, no one was ever able to make to man the complete and full revelation of God that Jesus was able to make; so the final words of this verse are the logical conclusion of the thought; "Neither doth any man know the Father save the son and he to whom the son willeth to reveal him."

In the context, immediately following, comes the great invitation "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Mt. 11.28-30). The statement of Jesus' unique relation to God, which precedes this, rather than being out of context, seems to be amazingly fitted to its context. Here are two things which belong together; the outstanding gospel statement of Jesus' unique relation to God and the great invitation to man. Because Jesus did have this consciousness of God, which set him apart he had the right to give the invitation in God's name as no other ever had. This certainty of God in his own experience implied the right to lay down the terms of salvation, the right to announce the terms upon which God would receive man. This consciousness further implied the right to invite men to him to learn of him, ie; take his yoike, to come and learn what was the true will of God, to come and find God as men heretofore had never found him. Jesus could invite men to come and find that rest for which the restless heart of humanity had always sought, but had

never found, because that rest was all ready an experience of his own heart. The first, and doubtless the basic implication of the God-consciousness of Jesus is, therefore, that no one else ever so completely and fully knew God as he.

b) The implication, also, that Jesus' consciousness of God made him superior to the prophets.

When the scribes and Pharisees sought a sign and Jesus said that they should have no sign except the sign of Jonah, that is; a preacher of repentance, (Mt. 12.38-42, Lk. 7. 29.-32), Jesus said also at this time "A greater man Jonah is here." In carrying the discussion further Jesus used the Queen of Sheba who came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, as an illustration and said in the same connection, of the man whom the Jews considered wisest of all; "And a greater than Solomon is here" (Lk. 11.32c) Also in a discussion of the Sabbath, he pointed out how the sanctity of the Temple allowed the priests to profane the Sabbath and remain guiltless and saying in conclusion; "One greater than the temple is here" Mt. 12.6. Jesus loved the prophets, appreciated them, realized better than any one ever has the deep insights which the prophets had into things spiritual, he feasted his soul upon their messages, indeed this was his daily spiritual food, but yet, with all this, Jesus was clearly conscious of possessing reaches of insight into the nature, purpose and will of God of which the prophets had never dreamed.

c) The implication that Jesus' consciousness of God gave him ability to make a new evaluation of the old Testament.

The two verses worth most for our inquiry here are

Mt. 5.17 "Think not that I came to destroy the law and prophets. I came not to destroy but to fulfil" and the saying repeated a number of times in Mt. 5 "Ye have heard that it was said to them of olden time **** but I say unto you." The first of these verses Matthew uses as an introduction to his exhibit on Jesus' way of handling the law; for this it serves the purpose very well. But if we knew in what situation this saying arose we would no doubt find that it came as an answer to the repeated accusation of Jesus' enemies that he was destroying the law and prophets, we would find, further, that this saying represents a revelation of the inner attitude of Jesus toward the law and prophets.

The second saying creates for us something of a problem, Jesus by the first statement says that his purpose is to fulfil the law, but yet in cases following such introductions as "I say unto you" he invariably seems to set aside the law, as in divorce, eye-for-an-eye, etc. What is the answer to this question; how may these two attitudes of mind be harmonized?

For the answer to this central question we must go back to Jesus' relation to God. Jesus knew that he knew God. Jesus knew God's character. He knew God's will. This daring assumption Jesus makes, it is the bed-rock and basis of all his teaching.

We must add to this another consideration; Jesus, along with his contemporaries, looked upon the old Testament, especially the law and prophets, as the real revelation of God's will. Jesus was not an iconoclast toward the old Testament, as some interpreters would have us believe. The authority of the Old Testament remained as real to him as to his contemporaries. It is his interpretation of the Old Testament that is phenomenal.

Taking the Old Testament for an authoritative revelation, he naturally expected that the will of God was to be found there. Furthermore, he was certain that the current interpreters were not finding the will of God, even to an inadequate extent, in the Old Testament scripture. So he tookd the Old Testament and subjected it to the touch-stone of his life and thinging;-his knowledge of the will and character of God. He took his certainty of the will of God and his wondrous experiences of God as a revealing glass through which he looked down upon the law and the prophets to discover there the true will of God. By this method he discovered in the Old Testament its ultimate spiritual values. He made every teaching which he brought forth from the Old Testament square with the will and character of God, as he in his unique and complete way had know and experienced the will and character of his Father. He felt able to reveal the thing which God had in mind, from the beginning, in giving the law. For instance in the Lex Talionis, Mt. 5.38-42, he taught that the thing uppermost in the mind of God from the beginning was to save the offender and win him away from his sins; in the beginning, by the law of equal for equal, God would save the offenders life from being destroyed by death which was the only punishment of the clan. But in the long run, God always planned to go further, and have all his believing children be co-workers with him in winning the offenders back to love and righteousness, so Jesus teaches that it is God's will to do that which is most likely to regain the offender, whether that be turning the other cheek or applying punishment. Jesus took the Old Testament and made it become an obedient vehicle in the expression of the mind of God. He fulfilled it by showing the highest and best that God had in mind in giving it to man. This all was possible because of the

God-consciousness of Jesus, because Jesus knew the ultimate spiritual p purposes of God. It was Jesus' certainty of the will and character of God which made him able to give his revolutionary interpretation of the Old Testament.

d) The implication that the attitude of men toward Jesus is also their attitude toward God.

This is one of the major implications of the gospels. This teaching again grows out of Jesus' certainty of God. We have a well-known statement of the point in consideration in (Mt. 10.32-33 Lk. 12.8-9) "Everyone who shall confess me before men, him shall the son of man confess before the angels of God, but he that danieth me in the presence of man shall be denied in the presence of God." This seems to be a clear statement that the attitude men take toward Jesus will determine the judgement received in eternity. Again the implication is here that it will mean everything in eternity for a man to be confessed by Jesus, if a man is worthy of Jesus' approval and defense that man is pleasing to God. At the close of the Sermon on the Mount, the man who hears and does the words of Jesus is likened to the man who built a house on the rock, but the man who neglects to do the things taught by Jesus is likened to a man who built his house upon the sand. Judging from the total impression of Jesus' life, we are certain that the author of the Gospel of John expresses well Jesus' idea of the judgment he brought to the world, John 3.19-21, "And this is the judgment, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light lest his works should be reproved. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light,

that his work may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God." We can hardly doubt that Jesus was in conscious possession of the light concerning the character and heart of God, and that his idea was that men were their own judges through the way they reacted to this light. His presence constituted the judgement; the process was simply that of men lining up for or against him. There is no suggestion that Jesus Claims such importance as here implicated for himself personally; it is simply that he knows so perfectly the character and will of God; that, to all effects, what a man does with Jesus he does with God. And what a man does with God is the most important decision in earth or eternity.

There is another class of passages, somewhat akin to the above, in which Jesus calls upon men to forsake everything, even father and mother, if necessary, and follow him. Here again, it is completely representing God, to follow him is to obey God, to reject his invitation is to reject God, that Jesus states his position so sharply. Again Jesus so completely identified himself with the Cause, that is the Kingdom of God, that he was the Cause. Whatever a man did, therefore, about Jesus he did about the Cause of God in the world. Realizing this, Jesus spoke such unmistakable alternatives.

Finally, the grave challenge which Jesus threw out in this class of passages, reveals to us his own self-consciousness. To him his consciousness of God was precious above every other value. Father and mother, sister, brother, friend had just as high value to Jesus as to any man who every lived, but if it came to a choice between these values and a compromise with the will of God, there was no choice, for Jesus it must be the will of God. Jesus asked his followers to put the consciousness of being right with God first in their lives because with him this had always been the supreme value.

II. THE MESSIAHSHIP IN THE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS OF JESUS.

1. Did Jesus believe that he was the Messiah?

There can be no doubt but that Messianism was ripe in the days of the young manhood of Jesus. In his thinking he could not have escaped some attitude and conclusions concerning this matter. Our question here is; Did he project in his self-consciousness the conviction that he himself was the Messiah? Our answer is; Yes, he did. We must take into account, of course, the radical modifications which he made in the popular concepts of Messiah. It is contended in this section that he believed himself to be the long-looked for Messiah, the materialization of the long standing promises to the Jews.

There is much argument which might possibly be brought against this position. Did Jesus think of himself as a prophet, teacher and a preacher of righteousness merely? And, after his death, did those who believed on him, especially those who believed in his resurrection, erect the theory of his Messiahship? Was this theory taken up, developed and popularized by Paul, and made the basis of a great system of salvation? Must we take the position that to Paul the world owes the doctrine that Jesus was the Messiah, and not to Jesus himself?

This position cannot be maintained.

First: It does violence to the Synoptic record. If we accept the gospels as the basis of our reconstruction of the self-consciousness of Jesus; we must reckon with the fact that Jesus' own belief in his Messiahship is a basic assumption of the gospel records. It is true, that these records present Jesus as very evasive and non-committal, for most part, on the question of his Messiahship; but, on

the other hand, this position was absolutely necessary under the exigencies of the circumstances. His work was largely in Galilee, and with the explosive attitude of mind which existed there, a public avowal of his Messiahship would have precipatated revolution. Such an avowal in Jerusalem would have brought upon him the watch-dogs of Rome.

Second: Jesus seems to be conscious of being the Messiah at the time of the temptation. The contention that the temptations were at heart, a period of distressing doubt concerning whether or not he was the Messiah cannot be maintained. The point of the temptation is not; try your power to prove whether you are the Messiah or not; but rather, since you are the Messiah; use your powér. The heart of the temptation is the enticement to use his power in ways which are not consonant with the will of God. The fact that he conceives the question settled that he is the Messiah is made the very vasis of the temptation.

Third: there is strong evidence in the scene of the Great Confession (Mt. 16.13-20, Mk. 8.27-30, Lk. 9.18-21) that Jesus believed himself to be the Messiah. Jesus aska of the disciples concerning the reactions of the people toward him; and finally concerning the reaction of the disciples themselves. Then Peter blurts out; "Thou art the Christ." Jesus replies; "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my father which is in Heaven." Plainly Jesus accepts the truth of the answer; evidence could hardly be clearer that he admits being Messiah. He cautions the disciples, however, that this fact must not be made public.

Fourth: the Triumphal Entry (Mt. 21.1-11 and paralells) could not conceivably have been made against the will of Jesus.

This acclamation during the march into Jerusalem seems to be Messianic. The method and pageantry indicate a certain type of Messiah, to be sure, but the Triumphal Entry is Messianic in its suggestions. Undoubtedly Jesus allowed himself to be thus acclaimed; in a somewhat parabolic and hidden way this was his public confession of Messiahship; and this very act doubtless hastened his execution.

Fifth: When on trial before the Jewish authorities Jesus undeniably admitted that he was the Messiah. "Again the High Priest said unto him: "Art thou the Christ the Son of the Blessed?" And Jesus said: "I am." (Mk. 15.16-62) The authenticity of this passage seems to serve no good purpose here and we can see no reason for Jesus deviating from his habit and respectful silence. Nevertheless this verse is no more open to rejection than any other verse; it is here and must be accounted for; and it is accounted for in the most logical way by accepting the position that Jesus fully believed himself to be the Messiah. While heretofore, Jesus had evaded the issue of his Messiahship for sake of his work which must be completed, but now, at the proper moment and before the highest authority of his nation without equivocation, he admits that he is the expected Messiah and is destined to be the Judge of the very judges who are trying him.

We conclude therefore, so far as the self-consciousness of Jesus is concerned that he had no doubt but that he was the Messiah. The remaining part of this discussion will take this position for granted.

2. When did the consciousness of Messiahship become a certainty in the life of Jesus?

From the gospel records, we are quite sure that Jesus believed himself to be the Messiah: but when we approach the question of when this consciousness became a certainty in his thinking; we enter upon far more debatable and uncertain ground. Below are indicated two of the main answers to this question of when.

a) The theory of late Messianic consciousness. This reconstruction holds that Jesus did not arrive at a clear conviction of his Messianic calling until about the time of the event at Ceasera-Phillipi. References to an earlier Messianic consciousness if found in the gospels are materials which have been placed too far forward by the editors. In the beginning of his ministry Jesus was conscious of being called only to the religious leadership of his nation. It was only after his defeat in Galilee, after being deserted largely by the populace, and after the conviction, on his part, that he would never win the rulers that he began to consider himself the Messiah. It was on the trip North for retirement, during the time of meditation and rest, that he finally came to the final realization that God had designated him to be the Messiah. This reconstruction makes Jesus a thorough-going believer in the apocalyptic type of Messiah. He does not expect to set up the Kingdom, as a man, but he expects to return, after his death, as the Heavenly Son of Man and then set up the Kingdom. Thus he was responsible for giving impetus to the eager expectation of his Second Coming found in the Early Church. This theory is not as popular now as a few years back when the current of thought tended to make Jesus more and more of an apocalyticist.

Scholars now are realizing more and more that along with the apocalyptic elements in Jesus' thought there are quite as certainly elements which look forward to the gradual growth of the Kingdom, and teachings which unmistakably point to the expectation on his part that the Kingdom is to be established in the social order to be found here and now. This reconstruction is not well supported by the general tenor of the gospel records. It also is almost an impossibility when the life of Jesus is approached psychologically. Such a complete change of thought on the part of Jesus concerning himself, his mission, his realtion to God, his life work would have been reflected by a sudden break and change in his actions and teaching; no such seam appears in the records as we have them. The records would indicate that Jesus possessed his consciousness of Messiahship at least by the beginning of his ministry.

b(The theory that the Messianic consciousness came at the Baptism.

The reconstruction which concludes that Jesus came to the consciousness of his Messianic calling during the Baptismal experience is held by so many scholars that it is practically unanimous. So far as the gospel records are concerned, it is at the baptism that the consciousness of Messianic calling appears to the mind of Jesus. Jesus comes up to the preaching of John the Baptist a young man, perfectly whole, physically, mentally, spiritually. He is young man in whose life the things of God have always been first. A young man who has made the first purpose of his life to follow the will of God. A young man filled with the fullest and most complete God-consciousness which it is humanly possibly to have. Under the preaching of John he comes to baptism; an act of complete

dedication of his life and effort to the Kingdom of God which John is announcing. At the baptism he hears an inner voice which says "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." To one of his day and according to the interpretation of these words in that day; these words could mean nothing else but the divine designation of him as the Messiah. Here then, he comes to the complete realization that he is the one pointed out by the Heavenly Father to be the Savior of his people. This reconstruction accords well with the general tenor of the gospel. It is no doubt the best answer given to the question as to when Jesus became fully conscious of his Messianic calling.

3. Was the Messianic consciousness of Jesus a process of development?

It is quite the habit to posit, at Jesus' baptism, a sudden inflow of Messianic consciousness. This has grown to be almost a dogma among New Testament writers. This should be examined carefully. It seems far more natural and logical that the Messianic consciousness was the product of development. It is entirely unlikely and psychologically almost impossible that Jesus came up to the Baptism of John just as any other young man would come from the carpenter shop, with no intimations and intuitions that he was to be called to the Messianic vocation. Unlikely too, that at this baptism, of a sudden, like a cyclone there should come a great inrush of Messianic consciousness So great, if we follow O. Holtzman, that it was likely to destroy the even balance of his personal life. Jesus was not such a one as would have abnormally unexpected experiences as this. To Paul there might have come such an intense and unwarned realization. For Paul was a man who consciously saw only one side of a question until he saw only the other. Such a man does not understand the deep and intense workings of his won nature until these inner processes break out and

take control; but to Jesus never, he who is so normal that he is the measure of all normality. Jesus who spoke in paradoxes and saw with sympathy both sides of the question, Jesus with the seeing sympathy of a poet. Jesus who knew first his own soul and then the souls of men so well. Freaks and sudden revolutions in his consciousness are perfectly unimaginable. He must have come to the Jordon after the question of the Messianic vocation had been uppermost in his mind for many meditative days. And, in the high spiritual atmosphere oft the group around John, and in the baptism itself, there came the end of the long questioning in the absolute and unmistakable assurance that he was the chosen Messiah.

How and by what means this Messianic consciousness developed we do not know. The reconstruction of the development of the Messianic calling in Jesus' life here presented is frankly a product largely of imagination.

In seeking to trace the rise of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus, concerning one thing we may be absolutely certain; that the beginning and source of this consciousness was his consciousness of God. The Messianic consciousness was a result, a product of his God-consciousness. With this fact as the locus of our thinking in this problem let us attempt to reconstruct the process by which the conviction of Messianic calling gradually rose to the consciousness of Jesus.

There came first, in this process, Jesus' own completely satisfying experience of God. The central fact that Jesus had discovered and attained, as discussed previously in this paper, the fullest possible experience of God, first for a boy, and then for a man. In this he had something to give which Jesus found in

his experience of God are too large and complete to be measured by words. In this experience of God he found freedom from the evil parasites of disposition, selfishness, jealousy, moodiness and covetousness. He found free dom from the cankering personal animosities toward others which do so much to sour and embitter human life. In his unbroken communion with God, his heart was kept full of joy and peace. In his responsiveness to the will of God he felt and knew that joy which comes from the mastery of temptation. Everything that he found in the world of nature was a source of satisfaction and happiness to him, the mountains, the birds, the farmers at work, the fields, the flowers of the meadows, the builders and their houses, the women at their house work, the shepherd caring for his sheep, the father training his sons, for in all these things he found God. Through his strong faith and his continual trust in the Heavenly father he was free from the fears and anxieties which vex and age the soul of man. In every relation of life his was a sense of happiness because of his relation to God. With his rich,full experience of God filled his heart to over-flowing, each new day.

The second step in the process of the development of the Messiah-consciousness in the thought of Jesus was, no doubt, that he noticed the results, in the lives of those around him, of the lack of such a relation to God as he possessed. He saw that those around him, though religious, had no such blessed experience as he, They kept the law but they did not live in God's presence. They could not see God in the world, neither in its beauty nor in its sorrow. Those around him were separated from God by a sense of guilt. When missing the open opportunity for happiness, to a greater or

lesser degree, by the presence of guilt in their hearts and by a wrong attitude toward God and a wrong idea of him. Jesus saw those around him disturbed and distressed by the anxieties of life. He saw their happiness marred by the desire for, and sometimes by the lack of, material things. He saw the best of them often beset and overcome by envy, jealousy, animosity and all manners of selfishness. He saw their lives drooping under the sense of moral failure. He saw the lineliness and despair which no human help can heal. He saw stark fear stand in the eye as the soul faced the realities of disease disaster and death.

Third, the thought of his possible Messianic calling came gradually to consciousness as he realized more and more the difference between himself and others around him. As Von Soden has said: "He could not have called himself Messiah, if he had not felt the difference first." There stood around him, perfectly visible in the hearts of others, the astounding fact of need. The spiritual need, deep and appalling, in the lives of men met him at every turn. With the discovery of this need came again and again the consciousness that the experience which he possessed would meet and cure the need. He saw men lacking in joy and freedom and happiness, and at the same time he realized that there could be no joys attributed to the Messianic feast that he did not have in his own heart. Why could not he teach and lead men into this same experience of God which was his constant joy? Why might not their lives be freed from all these besetting thieves of joy and peace by coming into his experience of God? Thus there came gradually from such thinking as this the question; Why is not this such a thing as the Messiah is to do?

What could the Messiah do, granted that he might bring prosperity, world rulership to the Jewish people, but what could he bring of so much value as this experience of God in the heart? Is not this the best thing? Am I to be the Messiah? Thus his calling grew out of what he was and what he had experienced. After brooding over such thoughts as these many days and coming to clearer and clearer apprehensions of the Messianic bearing of his experience of God, he came up to the preaching of John. And then at the Baptism, after the developing sense of his Messianic consciousness had gone through a long process he is ready to hear the voice "This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He is ready to arrive at the final and never again be questioned certainty that he is God's chosen Messiah.

4. What kind of a Messiah did Jesus think himself to be?

This, to be sure, is a very large question; and cannot be discussed at length in this paper. But at least a brief reference must be made to this question in any discussion of the self-consciousness of Jesus.

At this point of inquiry concerning the self-consciousness of Jesus, there is abundant materials in the gospels. All considered the most satisfactory source material for the question is the account of the temptations.

It is almost unthinkable that there could have been any original source of the temptation narrative than Jesus himself. Though not related in the Synoptics as words spoken by him, yet the experience of the temptation could never have been known unless Jesus himself had told it. There can hardly be an argument, therefore, but that this us usable material for a study of the self-consciousness of Jesus.

First, brief reference should be made by two categories of interpretation which are here used in reference to the temptations of Jesus.

1) The temptations are to be interpreted figuratively and literally. At one time it was quite commonly held that the temptations were literal incidents. There was an actual devil walking with Jesus in isolated places. There was an actual mountain from which Jesus saw the kingdoms of the world. The devil actually placed Jesus on the tower of the temple. Modern thought has made this construction untenable, ever to every-day Bible readers. The temptations came to Jesus through inner suggestions; there could have been no temptation to Jesus in the words of an actual and recognizable devil.

To be actually carried to the mountain top and to the tower of the temple would serve no purpose, one might just as really go in imagination. It is quite evident that the temptations narratives are parables, pictures, symbols of inner experiences which took place in the consciousness of Jesus.

2) The temptations represent not only decisive events but also persistent experiences in Jesus' life. Some writers contend that the temptation experience was not a decisive event in point of place and times, but that this narrative gives us three little parables which represent the chief recurrent temptations of Jesus' life. Quite a few incidents in the Synoptics might be cited in support of this position; for instance: the temptations to turn stones into bread reminds us of the crowd which once fed wants to be fed again and again, the temptation to jump from the pinnacle of the temple is closely related to the continual demand of the rulers for a sign, the crisis at Capernaum at which time Jesus refused to be crowned by force reminds us of the temptation to fall down and worship Satan and receive all the kingdoms of the world. On the other hand the gospel records plainly indicate that there was a distinct and definite time set aside for fasting and following this the temptation; everything goes to show that the temptations were distinct experiences at a distinct time and place. But the question as to whether the temptations represent distinct experiences or are just symbols of persistent experiences is not to be answered by "either-or" but rather by "both-and." The more likely solution is this; remembering that there are behind the temptations thirty years of living and thinking, we may easily believe that, at the beginning of this ministry, during the period of his temptation Jesus brought to a head the great underlying principles upon

which he should stand. But these very questions which formed the point at issue in the temptations were the very questions which came up again and again in his ministry. The forms differed but the points at issue were ever the same. And the issues were always decided by the dictates of the principles arrived at during the temptation experience. It is not suggested here that Jesus fore-saw all these problems and solved them in advance, but simply that as the problems presented themselves he used the principles, fused out of the intense heat of the temptation, as the touch-stones for the required solutions. So we may safely say that the temptations, while experiences of definite time and place, are also symbols of persistent experiences in Jesus' life.

The central point at issue in the temptation experience was: What sort of a Messiah shall I be? We have indicated how Jesus came up to the baptism after a long process of thought and struggle concerning the question as to whether or not he was the Messiah; and how at the baptism the final certainty came. After receiving the definite assurance that he was the Messiah, immediately he was faced by a most important set of decisions. What kind of a Messiah shall he be. What kind of a kingdom shall he establish? What means should he use to bring these things about? The temptations picture the struggles and decisions in the inner life of Jesus concerning such questions as the above. It is such questions as these rising to consciousness which accounts for the temptation experience.

Along with the final certainty of the Messianic calling there came another factor in his experience, a corrollary of his Messianic assurance; a new sense of power. He became conscious that there was resident in him and filling him a new power; a power that tingled to his very finger tips.

For what purpose was this power given? How was it to be used? Power meant a tremendous new responsibility. Power also meant a tremendous temptation.

This question concerning what sort of a Messiah Jesus thought himself to be must be answered also in relation to the historical situation in which Jesus found himself. This does not suggest that we must account for Jesus wholly in terms of his time, or reduce him to the common denominator of his time, but rather suggests very much the opposite. In the temptation experience we see Jesus rise decisively and masterfully above his time. Those who insist that Jesus was nothing more than the best possible product of his time must keep pretty far away from the story of the temptations.

Historically, the central point of strain is the clash between the conceptions of Messiah regnant in that time and Jesus' own conception of the Messianic work. There can be no clear understanding of the nature of the temptations or recognition of the full force of them except as we see them rising to his consciousness out of the historical situation. When ever the temptations get separated from the actual situation they become mere play-acting.

In order to keep close to the historical situation it is not necessary to take such a view as Simkhovitch, "Toward the Understanding of Jesus, in which he sees all events and activities of Jesus' life through one category, namely; that of his adjustment to the rule of Rome. Everything that Jesus did of a public nature was a contribution to his solution of this one great problem. This interpretation completely misses the true center of Jesus' life. Everything in his life did hang on one adjustment, not an adjustment to Rome, but an adjustment to God.

Only one thing was of supreme importance to Jesus and that was the right relation to the Heavenly Father; all things else whatsoever had to assume their secondary and proper places in relation to this supreme and central fact. Rome and its reulership may have been one of the problems solved in the light of this central fact, but, at most, that is all.

The more we get outselves back into the actual situation the more we feel the terrific strain of the temptations, a strain which, as has been suggested, came as a clash between the current ideas of Messianism and those which Jesus must find for himself.

The current Messianism of the day may be roughly divided into two great sections; 1) Nationalistic, 2) Apocalyptic. These two conceptions in many places shade into each other and have many points in common. Messianic ideas also were in constant state of flux. Nevertheless, these two conceptions may be said to represent the opposing poles of current Messianism.

The Nationalistic conception expected the Messiah to be born after the line of David. He would become the greatest earthly potentate. He would rule the whole world in the name of the Lord and in righteousness. This hope of conquering the world, rested in a faith something like the following: if a few, under the leadership of God's Messiah, with complete faith unwavering, should strike the blow, God's infinite power would come to their aid. From the start, by courage and by miracles, victory would follow victory. This conquest of the world would come partly, also, perhaps, by having the Gentiles come and ask to receive the benefits of the Messianic reign.

The apocalyptic conceptions called for a Messiah who should be a supernatural being, having supernatural powers who should

come down from heaven. He should be a heavenly, pre-existent being. Under this conception the Messianic rule was not to be fought for but to be awaited for. In God's good time he would send his heavenly Messiah and would destroy all enimies and all evil.

We must remember that Jesus lived among these Messianic expectations from his earliest boyhood. He breathed them as his native air. Galilee was a hot bed of Zealotism; rife with the expectation of a nationalistic Messiah. But side by side with this, scribes and other teachers were no doubt expounding the apocalyptic conception. If we make Jesus human at all, we cannot escape realizing what this high-powered Messianism must have meant to the growing boy and young man, to whom religion was life's chief interest. This Messianism had been woven into the very fibre of his mind and soul. It would seem a psychological impossibility for him to rise up and set aside these conceptions from which is thought life had been built. But this impossibility Jesus accomplished. He found for himself, under the guidance of communion with God, a new and unique conception of the Messianic work.

The individual temptations give us some hint as to the king of a Messiah he considered himself to be.

1) The temptation to turn stones into bread represents his struggle and decision concerning the bread-and-butter activities which were universally expected of the Messiah. There was a strong belief that the earth was to be transformed at the coming of the Messiah. Then, fields would grow grain as naturally as they now grow weeds. The poor and cropless land of Palestine would become as rich as Egypt when the Nile overflows. The common vines would bear prodigious crops. The half-starved people would banquet every day. Diseases and

ailments woulda ll be cured. Jesus is confronted with the question; "How can I be the Messiah at all and not accomplish these things?" But in the end, Jesus is so sure of God's will that he turns aside and rejects this general expectation. In his mind there could be no doubt of the dire need of such work on the part of the Messiah; but there was also an incomparably greater need: the need for spiritual food far more desperate than the need for material food, however, much material food might be needed. Men cannot be saved by the ministry of physical and bodily comforts; men can be saved only by being brought in touch with God. Put mankind in the right relation to God and all these other things will follow in course of time. But with the blessing of bread and butter and without God, a man will sink deeper in the mire. The bringing of bread to man is highly important, but in his conception of the Messianic work little if any time could be given to this, for he must be busily engaged in the supremely important thing: bringing God to man. "For man cannot live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."(Matt. 4.4.)

2) The experience on the top of the mountain is plainly a temptation to grasp the rulership of the world. This rulership was the foundation stone of his nation's conception of the Messiah. This temptation, or impulse, was a more real temptation to Jesus than we commonly suppose. From the standpoint of our age it seems utterly foolish to dream of taking the world from Rome. But Jesus no doubt believed that he had the power, if he would so use it, to conquer the world. But notwithstanding the fact that world rulership of some sort was the heart and soul of Messianism in Jesus' day, he arose up and in the strength of God set it aside. According to his conception of

the Messianic work, he would not rule over men by material and military force, no matter how benign that force might be; he would rule only by spiritual means, for this means alone was attested by the will of God. He would be a King, as he was born to be, but his kingdom must be spiritual "not of this world." Such a Messiah, and such a Messiah only would he be.

3) The temptation to leap from the tower of the temple represents his struggle and decision as to whether or not he would use any of the popular signs and expectations of the day to announce himself, to approve himself as the Messiah. As the humble carpenter of Nazareth how could he get a hearing for his message? But a hearing would be easy, if he would do only one of the acts, perform only one of the signs, commonly expected of the Messiah. To cast himself down from the temple would be one such sign. If, at the time of a great feast, he should suddenly fall from the topmost tower and remain unhurt, he would be immediately acclaimed Messiah. But neither this nor any other sign will he do, for not a one proves in harmony with the will of God. So he chooses to be the kind of a Messiah who will attest himself and his mission by preaching and teaching. His methods will be spiritual methods, he will take unto himself no methods or means which the prophets before him have not possessed.

Jesus, therefore, as we have seen, broke with both the nationalistic and apocalyptic conceptions of the Messiah. He was, in a very true sense, not the Messiah at all, so far as the meaning the Jews put into the word was concerned. Yet, in his environment, Messianism was the best and highest idea available in the realm of human thought; so he took this idea and filled it full with a new

content. He spiritualized the idea. He refined the idea. The faith age-long of the Jews, that a Messiah would appear was fulfiled. But fulfiled and answered in a new and better way than they had ever dreamed. One cannot be surprised that the Jew did not recognize the answer when it came.

In answering the question as to what sort of a Messiah Jesus thought himself to be; we have found that fundamental to this question is Jesus' full, satisfying and unbroken communion and experience with God. This experience, as the starting point, lead him finally to the complete realization that he was called to be the Messiah. As Messiah, he considered himself as one who, first and foremost, was to share with men his experience of God. He thought of himself as one who was the special spokesman of God; one who could indicate with absolute certainty and will of God and one who could extend with complete authority the invitation of God. He thought of himself as one who could expound with absolute certainty the Kingdom of God, its nature, its demands; and as one who was divinely annointed to urge men to accept and enter this Kingdom. He thought of himself as so perfectly in union with God in his experience, his work and understanding of Gods will that he considered that the attitude men took toward him constituted their attitude toward God and settled their spiritual and eternal destiny.

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